

SOUTH EASTERN FRANCE, August 7th - October 12th 2016

Sainte-Candie : a fortified hilltop settlement from the early Middle Ages
(c.500-c.750)
in Provence (Var, Roquebrune-sur-Argens)

Sainte-Candie is a fortified hilltop settlement located in south eastern France, on the edge of the Mediterranean Sea and prealpine passes. Many ancient surveys and excavations have established that «The Rock (Le Rocher)» has been intensively occupied by ancient societies between the Iron Age and Middle Ages. Therefore, the fortified settlement itself seems to have been occupied *ex novo* between the end of the 5th and the beginning of the 6th c. A.D. Excavations led from 2000 to 2004 and in 2015 have shown the site has been certainly deserted during the second half of the 6 c. A.D. or the beginning of the 7th c. A.D. and reoccupied during the 8th-9th c. A.D. Regarding the end of the occupation of Sainte-Candie, datas at our disposal seem to indicate a desertion before 1000 A.D., maybe echoing the birth of the *castrum de Roccabruna* in the valley, first mentioned c. 1044 A.D. and owned by a *miles* called *Dodonis*. For instance, only the church, which can be at the origins of the toponym reported on the 19th century cadastral matrix, has known an occupation between the end of the 12th and the beginning of the 13th century. Therefore, this last one, characterized as a domestic space within the building's walls, just betray the fact that it wasn't a church anymore at this time.

In Provence, the era between 8th and 10th centuries remains very dark in term of archaeological and textual sources. Sainte-Candie offers the opportunity to better understand this period, giving signs of an occupation during the 8th c. A.D. The objectives for 2016 are to extend the excavation of a domestic quarter first studied between 2000-2004 and in 2015, excavate an allegedly defensive building near the fortified wall and the topographically dominant building. Moreover, the academic work at the origins of this operation seeks to better understand how space has been managed around hilltop settlement. Then, we will also extend the excavation of an early medieval structure discovered in 2015 on the southern slopes. The objective is to try to understand when and why it was used.

This operation is part of a regional and an european program dealing with landscape dynamics during the early Middle Ages.

We are looking for **people with a good physical condition (a hard walk of 30 min to the summit, every morning and at the end of each day), determined and with good tempers.**

You can stay for 1 month at least or for the entire duration (2 months)

Food is provided, and so is the lodging. The «living base» is located in the city of Frejus, just near Roquebrune-sur-Argens. The place is an archaeological center, closed to public. We sleep under tents (it's not a problem during summer in southern France). Three showers, a kitchen and a living-room are our own and free disposal. During week-ends you will be able to enjoy the French Riviera (fatal argument). Feel free to contact me if you need further informations and to volunteer.

Excavation supervisor

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